Legal Services Society

ServicePLAN

Legal Services Society

British Columbia
www.legalaid.bc.ca

2013/14 – 2015/16

REVISED

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The *LSS Revised Service Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16* is a publication of the Legal Services Society (LSS). LSS is an independent organization that provides legal aid to British Columbians. LSS is funded primarily by the provincial government and also receives grants from the Law Foundation and the Notary Foundation.

The *LSS Revised Service Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16* is also available on the LSS website at **www.legalaid.bc.ca.**

For more information

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Message

From the Board Chair to the Minister Responsible

June 10, 2013
Honourable Suzanne Anton
Attorney General and Minister of Justice

Dear Madam Attorney:

I am pleased to present the Legal Services Society's Revised Service Plan for 2013/14 – 2015/16.

The key challenges the society currently faces and will continue to face during the term of this service plan are systemic and are the product of an operating environment over which LSS has little control. Demand for our services is driven by unpredictable factors such as the number of people charged with criminal offences, constitutional rights, family breakup, and legislative policies, yet our funding does not meet the demand. In addition, the courts are so backlogged that our clients are unable to resolve their legal problems in a timely manner, which increases our costs.

To address these challenges, LSS has developed three initiatives for 2013/14.

The first is promoting reforms that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system. Our road map for reform is *Making Justice Work*, the report we prepared in response to former Attorney General Shirley Bond's request for advice on ways in which legal aid can be used to make the justice system more responsive to users' needs. Our report promotes an outcomes-focused justice system and recommends a number of initiatives in the criminal, family, and civil context that have the potential to reduce costs. LSS sees this issue as so important that we have added justice reform leadership as a new goal to this service plan (Goal 5, page 11).

Our second initiative is a multi-year plan to replace our outdated case management technology with a new platform that integrates all our business processes into a single system. This project will improve our operational efficiency so that we get the most out of every dollar we spend. The new system is expected to be in place in 2014. I am pleased to advise that this project does not require additional government funding because our proven fiscal management allows LSS to cover the cost from its own resources.

The third initiative is to continue our discussions with ministry officials and justice system stakeholders about innovation, reform, and priorities. This is necessary to address the growing demands on our resources and capacity and to avoid the need to reduce services to meet the government's expectation of a balanced budget. While we are grateful for the recent $2.1 million increase in funding for family law services, current revenues are barely sufficient for the society to fulfil its statutory mandate. To maximize service dollars, LSS has over the past four years reduced its staff complement and overhead expenses to the minimum required to maintain operations.

In addition, we have made only one modest increase since 1991 to the tariffs we pay lawyers, which has resulted in fewer lawyers taking legal aid referrals and difficulty recruiting new lawyers. While these cost-cutting policies have allowed LSS to provide more services to clients, the society, without additional funding, now has limited capacity to address emergent issues such as new criminal and immigration laws introduced by the federal government, provincial justice reform initiatives, or service withdrawals by lawyers.

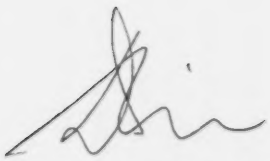
This will be the last service plan prepared during my term as chair. I have served as a director of the Legal Services Society from 1995 to 1999 and again since 2007. During that time, the society has been able to maintain services in the face of many challenges due largely to the dedication of its staff and the commitment of a rapidly diminishing group of inadequately compensated lawyers in private practice. Without these people, legal aid in this province would not be possible. My experience both on the board and as a lawyer has taught me that legal aid makes its greatest contribution to the justice system when it is able to provide the full range of services people with low incomes need to resolve their legal problems. In the board's opinion, increased funding for family law services and lawyer tariffs, along with new funding for poverty law services, will have a significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the justice system, not just for people with low incomes but for all British Columbians.

Statement of accountability

The *Legal Services Society Revised Service Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16* was prepared under the board's direction in accordance with the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act and the BC Reporting Principles. The plan is consistent with the government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The board is accountable for the contents of the plan, including what has been included in the plan and how it has been reported.

To the best of our knowledge, the significant assumptions, policy decisions, events, and identified risks are current and have been considered in preparing this plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the society's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of the society's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment, and past performance.

Yours truly,



E. David Crossin, QC
Chair, LSS Board of Directors

Contents

Organization Overview 1

Strategic Context 3

Key Strategic Issues 4

Goals, Strategies, Measures, and Targets 6

Government Letter of Expectations 12

Financial Outlook 14

Statements

of Vision, Mission, and Values

Our **vision** is a British Columbia where all people are able to find timely and lasting solutions to their legal issues that improve their quality of life.

Our **mission** is to provide innovative and integrated services that enable clients to effectively address their legal issues in a broad social context.

Our values

making a positive difference in our clients' lives through legal aid services;

engaging clients in finding solutions that meet their legal needs;

recognizing diverse cultures and perspectives;

compassion, integrity, and respect in our relationships with clients, staff, and stakeholders;

collaboration with service partners and stakeholders;

innovative approaches to solving problems;

excellence and continuous improvement; and

accountability and openness.

Organization

Overview

The **Legal Services Society (LSS)** provides legal aid in British Columbia. Created by the Legal Services Society Act in 1979, LSS is a non-profit organization that remains independent of government. Our priority is to serve the interests of people with low incomes.

Our core services

Legal representation services are available for financially eligible people with serious family, child protection, or criminal law problems. Legal representation is also available for people who face a refugee or deportation hearing, a Mental Health Review Panel or BC Review Board hearing, or who have a prison issue for which the Charter of Rights and Freedoms establishes a right to counsel.

Legal advice services are provided through criminal and family duty counsel in and out of courthouses across BC, immigration duty counsel for people in detention at the Canada Border Services Agency's enforcement centre in Vancouver, the Family LawLINE, and the Brydges Line telephone service for people who may or have been arrested. LSS also provides family advice lawyers at eight locations throughout the province.

Legal information services are delivered by front-line staff, including Aboriginal community legal workers, legal information outreach workers, local agents, and through publications and websites. Other information services include training and support for community workers and advocates who assist LSS clients. We collaborate with a wide range of community and government agencies to ensure people with low incomes have access to the services they need to solve their legal issues. LSS also contracts with its community partners to improve access to legal aid and other services in rural, remote, and Aboriginal communities.

To find out more about our services, visit our website at www.legalaid.bc.ca.

Our clients

Legal aid clients are among the province's most vulnerable and marginalized citizens. Our clients do not have the financial resources — or frequently the educational, social, or health resources — to effectively access the justice system when their families, freedom, or safety are at risk.

Last year, more than 100,000 people received legal representation, advice, and information services. Of the 27,433 clients who were referred to a lawyer in 2011/12, over 69% had less than a high school education, more than 28% were Aboriginal, and 31% were women. Our 2011/12 referral clients received services for criminal (73%), family law (15%), child protection (8%), and immigration (4%) issues.

We strive to engage our clients in finding solutions to their legal problems. By taking an integrated approach, legal aid services can help clients prevent future legal issues and increase their ability to positively contribute to society.

Our mandate

Under section 9 of the current LSS Act, the society's mandate is to:

- help people solve their legal problems and to facilitate access to justice,
- establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to people in BC, and
- provide advice to the Attorney General about legal aid and access to justice for people in BC.

For more information, visit our website at www.legalaid.bc.ca.

Governance

LSS is committed to strong corporate governance practices that enable public accountability and transparency.

Board of directors

LSS is governed by a nine-member board of directors. The LSS board is committed to using best practices to govern the society. Of our nine board members:

- five are appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Attorney General, and
- four are appointed by the Law Society of BC after consultation with the executive of the BC Branch of the Canadian Bar Association.

The LSS Act outlines the need for the board to have a range of knowledge, skills, and experience in areas such as business management of public and private sector organizations; the legal system (including legal aid); BC's cultural and geographic

diversity; and the circumstances associated with the legal needs of people with low incomes.

Committees

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the directors elect a board chair and an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is headed by the board chair and generally has authority on behalf of the board.

The board also establishes two committees to help it carry out its responsibilities:

- the Finance Committee, which makes recommendations on the society's finances, funding, fiscal allocations, and risk management; and
- the Stakeholder Engagement Committee, which recommends ways to strengthen the society's relationships with key stakeholders.

The chair, in consultation with the society's executive director, appoints the members of these committees, unless the board directs otherwise.

The society adheres to and is in full compliance with the governance principles established by the Board Resourcing and Development Office (BRDO). LSS reviews its governance framework regularly to ensure it meets the society's ongoing business needs. For more information about the LSS board and its governance practices, visit our website. Inquiries can be directed to the assistant corporate secretary at corporate.governance@lss.bc.ca.

Senior management

The board of directors appoints an executive director to administer the business of the society. The society has two main committees to oversee its operations.

- The Executive Management Committee (EMC), chaired by the executive director and consisting of LSS's four directors, provides LSS with overall strategic direction, policy, and planning.
- The Operations, Planning, and Policy Committee (OPP), chaired by the director of Strategic Planning, Policy, and Human Resources, advises EMC on interdivisional policy, strategic planning, operational issues, and policies for coverage, eligibility, and tariffs.

Board of directors

June 2013

E. David Crossin, QC
Vancouver
Chair, LSS Board of Directors
Chair, Executive Committee

Tom Christensen, lawyer
Vernon/Vancouver
Vice-Chair, LSS Board of Directors
Member, Executive Committee
Chair, Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Barbara Brink, CM, OBC
Vancouver
Member, Finance Committee
Member, Stakeholder Engagement Committee
Lead board member, Governance

Sheryl N. Lee, CA
Vancouver
Chair, Finance Committee
Member, Executive Committee

Deanna Ludowicz, lawyer
Grand Forks
Member, Executive Committee
Lead board member, Strategic Planning Session

Annita L. McPhee
Dease Lake/Terrace
Member, Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Suzette Narbonne, lawyer
Sechelt
Member, Stakeholder Engagement Committee

Puneet P. K. Sandhar, lawyer
Surrey
Member, Finance Committee

Darrell J. Wickstrom, lawyer
Vancouver
Member, Finance Committee

Directors

June 2013

Mark Benton, QC
Executive Director

Harold V. J. Clark, CHRP
Strategic Planning, Policy, and Human Resources

Sherry MacLennan, lawyer
Public Legal Information and Applications

Heidi Mason, lawyer
Legal Advice and Representation

Doug Wong, CA
Finance and Corporate Services

Senior managers

June 2013

Brad Daisley, lawyer
Communications and General Counsel

Tamara Ilersich, CHRP
Human Resources and Organizational Development

Branka Matijasic
Intake and Referral Services

David Griffiths, lawyer
Legal Services

Carol Jung, CIA
Audit and Investigation

Pamela Shields, lawyer
Aboriginal Services

John Simpson, lawyer
Community and Publishing Services

Kathryn Spracklin
Strategic Planning and Policy

Janice Staryk
Lawyer Services

Mihai Strusievici
Information Technology

Eugene Wandell, CMA
Finance and Administration

Strategic

Context

The Legal Services Society was created more than 30 years ago to provide legal aid to BC residents with low incomes. Legal aid is a core service in sustaining a just society and is essential in providing access to justice and ensuring equality before the law.

To achieve our mission, the society needs to adopt an approach that is client-focused (see Goals 1 and 2), resource-focused (see Goals 3 and 4), and systems-focused (see Goal 5). This means, we must manage our risks effectively and optimize our opportunities.

The three strategic issues listed here (and summarized in the table on pages 4 and 5) represent the key challenges facing LSS over the next three years.

Justice reform

The Ministry of Justice identified inefficiencies and systematic challenges with the justice system in their green paper. Former LSS Board Chair Geoffrey Cowper, QC, provided a report highlighting BC's trial-centred rather than client-centred approach to justice. Moreover, he commented on the lack of systems thinking and collaboration among justice system stakeholders.

LSS helped identify these concerns and outlined its justice reform strategy in *Making Justice Work*, our recommendations for reform and pilot initiatives that could generate savings that could be reinvested into legal aid. LSS is affected by policy changes that can ultimately raise the cost of providing legal aid services. Additionally, the increasing cost and complexity of large criminal cases continues to consume a larger portion of the justice system's resources.

To mitigate this, we will use data to ensure our funding goes to programs with proven outcomes and will promote this approach amongst our peers in the justice system. This will allow us to do our part and help build a stronger justice system to support access to justice for British Columbians.

We were encouraged by the government's recognition of our recommendations in its white paper on justice reform and look forward to taking these next steps toward justice system reform.

Financial resources

LSS has stable core funding; however, this funding is inadequate for the society to introduce or sustain piloted initiatives or collaborate with service partners on integrated services or reform projects. Careful planning and collaboration to maximize the value of taxpayer dollars, supported by investment by government in proven programs, will enable us to provide accessible and effective legal aid services.

Delivering quality services

To deliver quality service to clients, we must have appropriate infrastructure in place to process client applications efficiently and effectively, to place cases within a reasonable time, and have lawyers provide services that help our clients achieve a lasting solution to their legal problems. This requires engaged staff, strong business processes and information technology systems, and good relationships with our lawyers.

Key Strategic Issues

The table below outlines the key strategic issues LSS faces over the next three years, the opportunities these challenges represent, and the society's intended actions.

	Issue
Justice reform	The justice system faces challenges, including increased delays, procedural complexity, and cost of access. Complex criminal cases are absorbing an increasing proportion of the justice system's resources. LSS must demonstrate clear strategic direction and effective processes and controls to be perceived as a credible leader for justice reform. Justice reform initiatives lack a coordinated effort.
Financial resources	Core funding is stable but inadequate to support mandated services. LSS has fluctuating resources for strategic initiatives and insufficient revenue to introduce legal aid initiatives that promote lasting client outcomes, including justice reform. The society's ability to collaborate with service providers on innovative projects is limited by insufficient resources and competing priorities.
Delivering quality services	Lawyer attrition due to greying of the bar is not being offset by new lawyers taking on cases. Lawyer dissatisfaction with legal aid funding and justice system inefficiencies has led to service withdrawals. LSS requires an information technology system that is flexible. An engaged workforce and appropriate staffing levels are required to deliver effective and efficient services.

Risk statement	Opportunity	Action
A. Clients are unable to resolve their legal and related issues in a timely way, resulting in more problems. B. Justice system inefficiencies increase the cost of providing legal aid services. C. Legal aid is unable to provide timely services due to system backlog. D. LSS does not have the credibility to act as an effective agent for change and to advance our mission. E. Results in unanticipated demand and cost.	Collaborate with service partners to provide client-centred services and find synergies in existing processes. Strengthen relationships with internal and external stakeholders across BC communities.	Take a leadership role proactively providing advice to the Attorney General. (A, B, C) Continue to promote the use of evidence-based justice initiatives. (C, D, E) (See Goal 5)
A. LSS is unable to lead change on legal aid. B. LSS is unable to provide services that provide integrated and lasting solutions. C. LSS loses its reputation for innovation because it cannot build meaningful relationships with service partners, funders, and staff. D. Collaborative initiatives are not undertaken or are not successful because LSS and its partners have insufficient resources or competing priorities.	Make the best use of our resources and focus on areas where we have control, such as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of legal aid services and service delivery. Enhance public confidence in and perceived fairness of the justice system. Monitor public awareness of legal aid services.	Communicate the value of legal aid to government and to the public. (A, C, D) Consider exploring additional revenue streams. (B, D) (See Goal 4)
A. Lawyers withdraw services. B. LSS is unable to place cases with lawyers within a reasonable time or for a reasonable cost. C. LSS's information technology system change affects its ability to deliver services. D. Failure to improve the information system leads to disruption and creates internal challenges. E. Decline in employee engagement undermines LSS's ability to deliver effective services.	Develop a lawyer succession strategy to address greying of the bar. Promote a legal aid culture within the BC bar and educate lawyers on the benefits of legal aid. Establish incentives to encourage young lawyers to take legal aid cases. Use effective change management processes. Build staff engagement.	Explore synergies and build connections with government ministries and with community partners. (A, B) Encourage a legal aid culture among justice system partners. (A, B) Develop an agile information system that improves LSS's case management system. (C, D) Implement employee engagement initiatives. (E) (See Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Goals

Strategies, Measures, and Targets

The goals, strategies, and performance measures outlined in this service plan are designed to engage LSS staff, our service partners, and our clients in finding timely and lasting solutions to clients' legal issues while managing to budget.

LSS's goals describe our long-term commitment to building an integrated legal aid model. Our goals have continued from the 2008/2009 plan, with the addition this year of justice reform leadership as a new goal (Goal 5). The strategies to achieve these goals have been adjusted in this plan to respond to changes in our internal and external environment. All adjustments are noted in the table on page 11.

Performance management system

LSS assesses its performance by surveying key stakeholder groups (clients, lawyers, staff, and the public). LSS staff develops the survey questions and methodology, and independent research organizations carry out the data collection and analysis to ensure data is accurate and reliable. The society also monitors and reports on key internal operational and financial data, which are tested internally.

We selected satisfaction measures to track our overall progress in achieving intended outcomes for clients. These measures also track our success in engaging the support of private lawyers, who are our primary service partners; our employees, who are critical to service quality; and the public, to whom we are ultimately accountable. Increasing levels of client and lawyer satisfaction, employee engagement, and public support will demonstrate that we are meeting these stakeholders' needs. LSS chose budget-to-actual expenditure variance as a measure of financial performance.

LSS benchmarks its performance against like organizations, where possible, using the Common Measurement Tool (CMT). CMT is an independent client satisfaction benchmarking tool and data service that allows us to compare client satisfaction results against agencies providing similar services. We benchmark our employee engagement score against the BC Public Service using statistics provided by BC Stats. Though legal aid plans across Canada have not yet developed a common method of measuring performance, we regularly share performance and outcome information.

We set targets by considering benchmark data and evaluating the level of improvement possible given the strategies and activities planned in the coming period. Meeting our targets would demonstrate continuous improvement in stakeholder satisfaction with, support for, and use of our services, as well as financial responsibility, all of which are necessary to achieve our goals.

1 Use

People with low incomes who have legal issues use LSS services

Strategies

1.1 Make it easier for clients to access legal aid services.

1.2 Partner with Aboriginal and other underserved communities to deliver services that support positive client outcomes.

1.3 Support service partners[1] and front-line workers[2] to deliver effective and efficient services.

Performance measures	Actual	Target
(a) accessibility Percent of clients satisfied with the accessibility of LSS services	69 2010/11	73 2013/14
(b) helpfulness Percent of clients satisfied with the helpfulness of LSS services	62 2010/11	66 2013/14
(c) overall Percent of clients satisfied overall with LSS services	62 2010/11	66 2013/14

Importance: Client satisfaction overall and with the accessibility and helpfulness of LSS services shows that we are providing clients with the services they need when and where they need them, fulfilling our mandate to help people solve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice.

[1] Service partners: Agents or agencies LSS collaborates with to provide services, including local agents, tariff lawyers, and community agencies.

[2] Front-line workers: LSS staff and service partners who work directly with legal aid clients (e.g., LIOW and intake staff).

2 Participate

People with low incomes participate in solving and preventing legal issues

Strategies

2.1 Support service partners to inform clients about legal aid services and their rights.

2.2 Support front-line workers to inform clients about legal aid services and their rights.

Performance measures	Actual	Target	
(a) client Percent of clients satisfied with LSS support to help them participate in resolving their legal issues	59 2010/11	63 2013/14	
(b) lawyer Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support to increase their ability to engage clients in solving their legal issues	42 2009/10	46 2012/13	50 2015/16

Importance: Clients who participate in finding solutions to their legal problems are more likely to achieve positive, lasting outcomes. Measures (a) and (b) assess the effectiveness of the support provided by LSS to clients and lawyers to help clients participate.

3 Collaborate

People with low incomes get help with related legal issues so they can solve and prevent legal problems

Strategies

3.1 Collaborate with service partners to assess and refer clients to services for their related issues.

3.2 Support front-line workers to assess and refer clients to services for their related issues.

Performance measures	Actual	Target	
(a) client Percent of clients satisfied with the level of support LSS gave them to address their related legal issues	48 2010/11	52 2013/14	
(b) lawyer Percent of lawyers satisfied with LSS support for increasing their ability to help clients address related legal issues	22 2009/10	26 2012/13	30 2015/16
(c) lawyer Percent of lawyers who support the integrated approach to providing legal aid services	71 2009/10	75 2012/13	79 2015/16

Importance: Clients who get help for their related legal issues are more likely to achieve positive, lasting solutions to their legal issues. Measure (a) tracks the effectiveness of LSS efforts to provide clients with information about services for related legal issues. Integrating services requires all service partners to have the necessary skills and resources. Measures (b) and (c) assess our progress on supplying lawyers with the tools and information to support this approach.

4 Manage

LSS manages resources soundly

Strategies

4.1 Manage internal communications.

4.2 Develop and implement lawyer engagement initiatives.

4.3 Introduce employee engagement initiatives.

4.4 Improve information systems to respond to a changing environment.

Performance measures	Actual	Target	
(a) employee Overall average employee engagement score	67 (Target 73) 2011/12	70 2014/15	
(b) lawyer Percent of lawyers satisfied with the overall support provided by LSS	62% 2009/10	66% 2012/13	70% 2015/16
(c) new lawyers New lawyers taking more than three referrals in the first six months	86 2011/12	> 60 annually	
(d) budget-to-actual Budget-to-actual expenditure variance	-1.10% 2011/12	<1.5% annually	
(e) public Percent of the public that supports the provision of legal aid services	89% 2011/12	>90% annually	

Importance: High employee engagement in the public sector, tracked by measure (a), is linked to improved service for clients. Measures (b) and (c) qualitatively and quantitatively assess our progress on maintaining a sustainable supply of lawyers to provide services to clients across BC. Maintaining a low budget-to-actual expenditure variance, measure (d), shows that we are effectively managing expenditures. Sustained public support for legal aid, measure (e), should enhance government confidence in our services.

The budget-to-actual expenditure variance is calculated at year-end using the following formula: Variance = 1 - [actual/budget]. Specific expenditures that are budgeted separately as they occur are excluded from the calculation.

5 Leadership

LSS takes a leadership role in justice reform

Strategies
5.1 Promote outcomes-based justice reform initiatives.
5.2 Pilot evidence-based legal aid initiatives to improve access and outcomes.
5.3 Communicate LSS's strategic direction to stakeholders.

Performance measure	Actual
volume of references To LSS's justice reform proposals in academic literature, government reports, and media	Baseline to be established in 2013/14

Importance: High volume of references to LSS's justice reform proposals in academic literature, government reports, and the media indicates that LSS's ideas are being reviewed and considered by key justice system decision makers and opinion makers.

Adjustments to Service Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16

	1 Use	2 Participate	3 Collaborate	4 Manage	5 Leadership
Goals	No change	No change	No change	No change	New goal
Strategies	Simplified strategy 1.1 to focus on accessibility. Revised strategy 1.2 to focus on partnering with Aboriginal and other underserved communities in a way that promotes positive outcomes. Modified strategy 1.3 to focus on supporting service partners and front-line workers to deliver effective and efficient services.	Split last year's strategy into two strategies: 2.1 focuses exclusively on service partners and 2.2 focuses on front-line workers.	Moved strategy 3.3 to Goal 5.	Moved strategies 4.1 and 4.2 to Goal 5. Renumbered last year's strategies (previously 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5). Introduced strategy to manage internal communications.	Added new strategy to promote outcomes-based justice reform initiatives.
Measures	No change	No change	No change	No change	New performance measure included "volume of references to LSS's justice reform proposals in academic literature, government reports, and media".

Government

Letter of Expectations

LSS and the Ministry of Justice jointly approve a government letter of expectations (GLE) from the ministry to the society each year.

The government uses GLEs to communicate its priorities, mandate direction, and key performance objectives to each Crown agency for the coming year. This supplements the three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LSS and the ministry.

Our actions to address the GLE for 2013/2014 are outlined in the table below. For more information, visit our website at www.legalaid.bc.ca.

	Financial performance	Support policy, planning, and program coordination
Expectations	To meet periodically to consider the budget development cycle; the financial position of LSS; the establishment of LSS's strategic priorities to ensure alignment with the government's strategic priorities; and issues relating to LSS's objects that might affect government's responsibility for legal aid and access to justice.	To meet periodically to consider coordination of policy and program development. Share information and consult with the government to support policy, planning, and program coordination by ensuring service delivery aligns to the government's strategic priorities, policy objectives, and fiscal plan; collaborating with government on issues such as large cases and justice reform; collaborating with government and other justice participants on justice reform initiatives that promote early resolution; promoting early, collaborative dispute resolution in child protection and family law cases; and participating in the coordination of services among LSS, government, and other justice system participants to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of legal aid services.
LSS action	LSS has established rigorous cost monitoring and forecasting models to help ensure the society meets budget targets. LSS will continue to provide monthly reports on exceptional matters to the Ministry of Justice.	LSS will collaborate with key stakeholders in the justice system to enhance large case management and justice reform. LSS will continue to support early, consensual dispute resolution in family and CFCSA cases through the simplified tariff as revenue allows. LSS will continue to communicate with the Ministry of Justice on government and society priorities and the LSS service plan throughout the annual planning process.

Legislative framework	Communication	Reporting	Climate change
Conduct operations and financial activities consistent with the legislative and policy framework established by government.	Establish a working group to meet monthly, as required.	Meet performance reporting requirements as set out in the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act, the Financial Administration Act, and the Financial Information Act.	Comply with government requirements to make the public sector carbon neutral.
LSS is in compliance with the LSS Act and the MOU. LSS regularly provides financial, statistical, and other information about legal aid services to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.	LSS will participate in working group meetings to review and coordinate budget development, strategic priorities, policy and program development, issues related to legal aid and access to justice, and other issues as they arise.	LSS will continue to meet all reporting requirements.	LSS will implement a new environmental policy that engages staff in efforts to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. LSS will review and develop print and copy monitoring solutions to reduce paper usage, complete conversion to recycled paper, minimize business travel, and renovate our premises to sustainability standards (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). LSS will complete and file carbon neutral action reports as required.

Financial

Outlook

Summary financial outlook 2012 – 2016 (in millions)

	2011/12 Actual	2012/13 Preliminary Actual	2013/14[1] Budget	2014/15[1] Budget	2015/16[1] Budget
Revenue					
Provincial grant	$ 75.6	$ 78.4	$ 72.5	$ 72.5	$ 72.5
Other revenue	5.1	5.1	4.7	4.7	4.7
Total revenue	**80.7**	**83.5**	**77.2**	**77.2**	**77.2**
Expenses					
Tariffs	$ 60.4	$ 62.7	$ 55.0	$ 55.0	$ 55.0
Salaries	10.4	10.9	11.0	11.2	11.4
Contracted services	5.4	5.5	6.5	6.3	6.1
Premises	1.7	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.9
Computers	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.0
Amortization	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Office	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4
Travel	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2
All other	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5
Total expenses	**80.8**	**83.9**	**77.2**	**77.2**	**77.2**
Net income/(deficit)[2]	**(0.1)**	**(0.4)**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Accumulated surplus	**6.4**	**6.0**	**6.0**	**6.0**	**6.0**
Debt	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**

Notes

1. The budgets for the years 2013/14 through 2015/16 inclusive are projections and not yet approved. As per section 18 of the Legal Services Society Act, LSS will seek budget approval from the Attorney General in each of those respective years. LSS will provide large case services to the budgeted amount each year ($2.85 million in 2013/14); any additional required services would need additional funds.
2. On December 14, 2012, the board restricted the accumulated surplus to be used for board-directed strategic initiatives. They allocated $4.3 million for the ISIS project as a board-strategic initiative. These costs will be capitalized starting in 2014/15 and will be amortized at a cost of $0.4 million per year for each of the next 10 years. The budget for those years does not include this cost, pending approval of the budget by the Attorney General and Treasury Board.

Key assumptions

- No material changes in the number of cases prosecuted by the province and no material changes in the Provincial Court hours of service.
- Criminal cases in excess of $175,000 will be funded separately by the Ministry of Justice as per the MOU.
- No material changes in the demand for legal aid or in the poverty rate in BC.
- No provision has been made for cost increases as a result of the changes to immigration legislation or other justice reform initiatives.

Forecast risks and sensitivities

- Unanticipated increases in the volume or average cost of cases, including increases from federal Criminal Code changes.
- LSS's change to Public Sector Accounting Board reporting requirements may have unanticipated consequences that could result in changes to reported revenue and expenditures.
- Changes in interest rates and economic conditions affecting non- governmental revenue sources.
- Inflationary pressures.
- 2014/15 and 2015/16 budgets do not represent accurate forecasts of revenue and expenditures as they are largely extrapolated from the 2013/14 budget. The cost and scope of services is expected to change over a three-year period.

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